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Daily Report

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Daily Report

Sub-Saharan Africa

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Joint Angola Peace Summit Reportedly Postponed

*MB0801182490 Lusaka Domestic Service in English
1800 GMT 8 Jan 90*

[Text] A State House spokesman announced today that the eight-nation 1-day summit on the Angola peace process, which was scheduled to take place in Luanda, the Angolan capital, on Wednesday, 10 January, this year, has been postponed to a later date yet to be agreed upon.

The meeting was supposed to be attended by the eight heads of state of Angola, Congo, Gabon, Mozambique, Sao Tome and Principe, Zaire, Zimbabwe, and Zambia.

The State House spokesman explained that the meeting has been postponed because Zaire's President Mobutu Sese Seko, the mediator between the Luanda government and the UNITA [National Union for the Total Independence of Angola] rebel movement, could not attend due to a prior engagement, which needs his presence in Zaire on the same date, 10 January. In view of the crucial role President Mobutu is playing as a mediator, it is important that he attends the meeting.

This is the second time that the summit has been postponed. The meeting had earlier been scheduled to take place on 27 December last year, but it had to be deferred because President Bongo, of Gabon, and President Denis Sassou-Nguesso, of Congo, could not attend due to prior commitments.

Libreville Sources on Postponement

*AB0901064490 Paris AFP in English 2334 GMT
8 Jan 90*

[Text] Libreville, Jan 8 (AFP)—A summit meeting of eight central and southern African chiefs of state slated for Wednesday (January 10) in Luanda to discuss the Angola problem has been postponed a reliable source said here Monday evening.

The source said that Zaire President Marshal Mobutu Sese Seko, the main mediator in the conflict between the Angola regime and Jonas Savimbi's UNITA armed opposition movement, considered that the time was not right for such a meeting.

(As received in Lisbon, the Angolan news agency ANGOP reported the postponement Monday evening. The dispatch said that the delay was due to the fact that the Zaire leader could not go to the Angolan capital on Wednesday, according to a communique issued by the Angolan Foreign Ministry.)

The summit meeting, which had already been postponed from last December 27, was to be attended by the presidents of Angola, Congo, Gabon, Mozambique, Sao Tome and Principe, Zambia, Zaire and Zimbabwe. It was to discuss the status of the peace process in Angola, and was to make new proposals aimed at improving the Gbadolite peace plan for Angola.

However, observers in the Gabonese capital have noted that the Angolan belligerents have made numerous statements during the last few days showing utter antagonism between their respective viewpoints on the long-standing conflict.

Angolan Defence Minister Pedro Maria Tonha recently said in Cabinda that the Angolan Armed Forces should continue, in 1990, "to fight UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) and make it lay down its arms." UNITA said on Monday in a communique that reached the AFP bureau in Lisbon that it rejected the new peace proposals made by the Luanda government.

Observers here said that such developments may well have led President Mobutu to request postponement of the summit in the hope of bringing the rival viewpoints closer together before such a meeting is held.

The meeting would be the fourth such summit gathering devoted to the Angola problem.

OAU Concerned About Pik Botha Budapest Visit

*EA0401185690 Dakar PANA in French 1440 GMT
4 Jan 90*

[Text] Addis Ababa 4 January (PANA)—This afternoon in Addis Ababa, the OAU secretary general expressed "great concern" over the South African foreign minister's visit to Hungary. Receiving the Hungarian ambassador to Ethiopia at the OAU headquarters, Mr Salim Ahmed Salim noted the contrast between Hungary's traditional support for liberation movements in South Africa and Mr Pik Botha's presence in Budapest. Mr Salim described the visit, the first of its kind, as "very regrettable and even embarrassing" in view of Hungary's active role within the UN Special Committee against Apartheid. The OAU secretary general asked the Hungarian diplomat to convey the organization's "concern" over the visit. He hoped it would not lead to the establishment of political, economic, commercial, or cultural relations with the apartheid regime.

Mr Salim Ahmed Salim took the opportunity to ask the international community to increase its vigilance and "intensify pressure on the racist regime so that the diabolical regime can be quickly dismantled and the people of South Africa live in liberty and dignity within a non-racial, democratic, and united South Africa".

Security Enhancements at 20 Airports Noted

*AB0801204390 Paris AFP in French 1457 GMT
8 Jan 90*

[Text] Brazzaville, 8 Jan (AFP)—Twenty African airports, including that of Congo, are going to be equipped with electronic security devices worth 1.5 billion CFA [African Financial Community] francs (Fr30 million). These devices will be used to search passengers and luggage, it was learned from French sources in Brazzaville. This decision was made following a report by a

French mission in cooperation with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

The mission, made up of civil servants from the French Cooperation Ministry and Civil Aviation Headquarters, recently visited airport installations in several countries on the African Continent in order to learn about their needs in the field of security. The project is aimed at equipping the various airports with sophisticated electronic facilities to forestall any terrorist activities like the one involving the UTA DC-10 which, after leaving Brazzaville airport, exploded in flight above the Tenere Desert in Niger on 19 September. The disaster occurred not long after the aircraft had made a stopover in Ndjamena (Chad).

The search of luggage in most African airports has so far been done by hand without any electronic control system. In Brazzaville, as in most other airports of the region, searches have been considerably intensified since the UTA catastrophe. Two weeks ago, a Chinese Foreign Ministry delegation, led by a deputy minister, was refused access to an aircraft taking off from Brazzaville because they refused to have their luggage searched, according to reliable sources.

PANA Reviews Senegal, Kenya Press

*AB0501205590 Dakar PANA in English 1340 GMT
5 Jan 90*

[Weekly Press Review]

[Text] Dakar, 5 Jan (PANA)—Both international and domestic issues were the focus of editorials in the African press during the week.

In Tunisia, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali's new year address was the major focus of editorial comment. The Arabic newspaper, "AL-HURRIYAH" said the president's speech had shown his determination to improve the lot of Tunisia's poor by emphasizing the need to improve their purchasing power. It said the president had also reemphasized his commitment to strengthening democracy in the country.

"LA PRESSE" called on all Tunisians to rally behind Ben Ali in his efforts to ensure the growth of democracy in Tunisia.

In Senegal, "LE SOLEIL" drew attention to the rush for emigration in the country. It said an economic crisis had

given rise to the illusion that quick fortunes could be made abroad. It however noted that many Senegalese were often ill-prepared for life overseas, with many embarking on trips without even the most basic documents. Often "they leave with the barest minimum, sometimes even without passports," the newspaper said. The result was often unforeseen difficulty and bitterness.

On the international front, the KENYA TIMES questioned the wisdom of African states trying to open diplomatic relations with South African regime. It said despite claims of reforms, the South African regime had done little to show it was determined to end apartheid and help bring about a democratic society in the country. It said the South African president, Frederick de Klerk, was not serious about dismantling apartheid and had launched a diplomatic offensive to buy time for the ailing apartheid regime. The daily warned that African states that open diplomatic relations with South Africa could undermine the African effort to ostracise the regime. It called on them not to fall prey to De Klerk's pretensions to reform at the cost of the liberation struggle in South Africa.

The DAILY NATION, another Kenyan newspaper, meanwhile warned that the rapid changes taking place in Eastern Europe could further marginalize Africa in international affairs. On the economic front, it was likely that much sought after capital would now be directed to Eastern Europe at the expense of the continent. The daily however said this competition could offer Africa an opportunity to launch a drive toward greater self-reliance and a restoration of its dignity in the international arena.

LE SOLEIL (Senegal) on the other hand appealed for a more concerted effort to bring an end to the war in Sudan following the stalled peace talks between the Sudanese Government and the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement. It said the Organization of African Unity President, Husni Mubarak could use his personal esteem and the good relations his country, Egypt, has had with Sudan to put the negotiations back on track. It said the successful resolution of the Sudanese conflict would also depend on the government's willingness to accept the religious and cultural differences between the north and the south of the country. LE SOLEIL warned that Sudan, a country rich in cultural and ethnic diversity, could not enjoy peace without tolerance.

Chad

PLO's Yasir 'Arafat Arrives in Ndjamen

AB0801211990 Ndjamen Domestic Service in French
1900 GMT 8 Jan 90

[Text] The Palestinian head of state, Mr Yasir 'Arafat, this morning arrived in Ndjamen. The PLO leader is on a friendly working visit to our country beginning today. President Hissein Habre welcomed him personally at the Ndjamen international airport. Also present at the airport were members of the government, the heads of the diplomatic missions and international organizations in Chad, members of the Central Committee of the National Union for Independence and Revolution, members of the (?Chadian Trade Union Federation), and members of the (?Islamic Committee).

While welcoming President Yasir 'Arafat this morning, President Habre said: You are at home on Chadian soil. In a statement to Chadian newsmen upon arrival, the Palestinian head of state said he is extending his heartfelt congratulations to President Habre on his brilliant election as head of the Chadian state. Let us listen to the Palestinian head of state as he discussed with newsmen the aim of his visit to our country [passage indistinct]. After leaving the VIP lounge of the Ndjamen airport, President 'Arafat was taken to the Guest Villa.

This afternoon, the two statesmen held their first private talks which lasted 2 hours. Before these talks, Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the PLO, offered a meaningful gift to his host, President Hissein Habre. The gift depicted the holy Al-Aqsa Mosque of Jerusalem and the Holy Koran. The mosque is made of marble and is the work of the entire Palestinian family. The Al-Aqsa Mosque was constructed by Caliph Omar, second Caliph of Prophet Mohammad.

President Yasir 'Arafat will be the guest at a dinner hosted in his honor by President Hissein Habre at 2000.

Congo

Gabon's Bongo Marries Sassou-Nguesso's Daughter

AB0501111590 Paris AFP in French 11:5 GMT
4 Jan 90

[Text] Brazzaville, 4 Jan (AFP)—The marriage of Gabonese head of state Omar Bongo, 54, and the eldest daughter of the Congolese president, Edith Sassou-Nguesso 27, took place yesterday at Oyo (northern Congo), in a traditional African ceremony, the official Congolese radio announced today.

Seated under a magnificent tent set up in the center of President Sassou-Nguesso's hometown, President Bongo

and his fiancée, surrounded by members of their respective families, exchanged a glass of orange juice, symbol of love and the permanence of the marriage ties, the radio indicated.

Then the Gabonese president gave a sum of 50,000 CFA [African Financial Community] francs, (Fr 1000) as dowry to the family of the young woman, as well as several gifts in kind: two textile items, a headscarf, a traditional dress and a pair of women's shoes, a hoe and a shovel, the radio added.

Congolese family code fixes the dowry at 50,000 CFA francs. However, the man can give a larger sum if he wishes.

Marshal Mobutu Sese Seko, Zairian head of state, who was expected at the ceremony, did not make it to Oyo.

Zaire

No Reaction to Belgian Minister's Postponed Visit

AB0601203090 Paris AFP in French 0913 GMT
6 Jan 90

[Text] Kinshasa, 5 Jan (AFP)—The Zairian authorities had no comment following the announcement on 3 January by Brussels postponing Belgian Foreign Minister Mark Eysken's visit to a date that is yet to be set. The visit was to take place next week in Kinshasa and seal the resumption of good relations between Belgium and Zaire. The Belgian minister's visit to the Zairian capital was organized for the signing of bilateral and cooperation agreement provided for in the protocol agreement signed in Rabat on 26 July. This new cooperation must be characterized, as stressed by several Zairian officials, by relations "which should forever be devoid of any hint of colonialism."

The crisis between Zaire and Belgium—one of the most serious since the independence of the former Belgian colony in 1960—broke out in 1988 following a "campaign of disparagement against Zaire," according to the Zairian authorities. Relations between the two countries, which were on the point of breaking up, resumed in July 1989 in Paris during the celebration of the French Revolution bicentennial. A meeting between the Zairian head of state, Marshal Mobutu Sese Seko, and Belgian Prime Minister Wilfried Martens led to the signing of the Rabat protocol agreement, under the supervision of Hassan II of Morocco. The agreement included the writing off of 11 billion Belgian francs (\$280 million) from Zaire's debts and the rescheduling of 11.5 Belgian francs from its commercial debt.

On 3 January, a spokesman of the Belgian foreign minister pointed out that the postponement of Mr Eysken's visit was for a purely technical reason. "It is only a material delay and not a political one," he stressed, adding that negotiations on the establishment of the Bilateral Development Fund could be completed

"very quickly." STANDART, the Belgian newspaper, recently reported that the negotiations between the parties have been made difficult following the announcement on 22 December by the official ZAIRIAN NEWS

AGENCY [AZAP] of the discovery of a plot against the Zairian president organized in Brussels, which was to take place during the Belgian minister's visit initially scheduled from 8 to 14 January.

Somalia

Government Dissolved 'on Permanent Basis'

AB0901103190 Paris AFP in French 1016 GMT
9 Jan 90

[Text] Nairobi, 9 Jan (AFP)—Mogadishu Radio this morning announced the dissolution of the Somali Government, it has been learned from Western diplomatic sources in the Somali capital. President Siad Barre has dissolved the government "on a permanent basis," and the incumbent cabinet is "awaiting a new definition of its status," a Western diplomat, who requested not to be named, explained, quoting a communique carried by the Somali national radio.

No other information was immediately available on this move by President Siad Barre, who has been in power for a little over 20 years.

President To Form New Government

AB0901121190 Paris AFP in English 1202 GMT
9 Jan 90

[Text] Nairobi, Jan 9 (AFP)—Somali President Mohamed Siad Barre dissolved his government Tuesday, according to a brief statement from the president's office broadcast on Mogadishu Radio.

"The president is going to form a new government," an official at the Somali Embassy in the Kenyan capital later said, citing the radio report, but no other details were immediately available.

A Western diplomat reached in Mogadishu earlier quoted the radio as adding that outgoing ministers were awaiting details of their status, the source asked not be named.

Major-General Barre, who has been in power for more than 20 years, faced a growing challenge throughout 1989 from rebel movements in both the north and the south of the country.

Well-armed rebels of the Somali National Movement (SNM), firmly backed by the Issaq tribe, hold about half of northern Somalia, an AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE correspondent noted in an extensive visit to the region in November.

A separate Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM) is harassing government troops in the south, notably around the port of Kismaayo. In July, there was also bloody unrest in Mogadishu, when Moslem demonstrations were violently repressed.

Late last month, the chairman of a special committee appointed by Gen. Barre announced that a nationwide referendum may be held this year on a proposed constitutional amendment to introduce a multi-party system.

ANC Ready To Cease Hostilities Under 'Conditions'*AB0801161590 Paris AFP in English 1553 GMT
8 Jan 90*

[Text] Lusaka, Jan 8 (AFP)—The African National Congress (ANC) pledged Monday to continue 'the armed struggle' to overthrow white minority rule in South Africa, but reiterated a readiness to enter into negotiations with Pretoria under certain conditions.

The points were made in a statement issued by the ANC's National Executive Committee and presented here by ANC Secretary-General Alfred Nzo to mark the movement's 78th anniversary.

"We are ready to enter into an agreement with the Pretoria regime for a mutual cessation of hostilities as soon as a climate conducive to negotiations is created," the statement said.

The ANC, South Africa's main guerrilla-backed opposition movement, has said in the past that to create a climate for negotiations Pretoria should free all political prisoners, unban outlawed organizations, lift the state of emergency and pull troops out of the black townships.

"The overwhelming majority of our people will not rest until the apartheid system is totally abolished and a non-racial democracy in a united South Africa is established," the statement said.

The ANC, formed on January 8 1912, was banned in South Africa in 1960. It has its exiled headquarters here in the Zambian capital.

Winnie Mandela Optimistic About Husband's Release*MB0801131990 Umtata Capital Radio in English
1200 GMT 8 Jan 90*

[Text] Winnie Mandela has discussed the arrangements for her husband's release with him for the first time.

She visited jailed ANC [African National Congress] leader Nelson Mandela in his prison home, outside Paarl.

Mrs Mandela told reporters his release should be soon. She did not speculate exactly when it will happen.

She was accompanied to the prison by the Mandela's lawyer, Adullah Omar, but saw her husband alone for more than 3 hours.

Mandela's release is high on the agenda of State President F.W. de Klerk. It is hard to believe (the release) [words indistinct] the international community on South Africa.

[Umtata Capital Radio in English at 1300 GMT on 8 January adds in a similar report: "Winnie Mandela is optimistic about the release of her husband, jailed ANC leader Nelson Mandela.

["Speaking after a 3-hour visit with her husband at the Victor Verster Prison, near Paarl, Mrs Mandela said no release date has been given, but she is confident that, as she put it, we are no longer talking about the question of months, rather of weeks.

["Speculation is mounting that President F.W. de Klerk will announce Mandela's release after 28 years of imprisonment during the opening of parliament on 1 February."]

Views Possible Release of Husband*AB0801121590 Paris AFP in English 1212 GMT
8 Jan 90*

[Text] Paarl, South Africa, Jan 8 (AFP)—Winnie Mandela, wife of Black South African nationalist leader Nelson Mandela, said her husband's release from jail was no longer a matter of "months" here Monday.

After a visit of more than three hours with her husband in his prison warder's house here east of Cape Town, a broadly smiling Mrs. Mandela for the first time appeared optimistic that he would be freed soon.

"We are not talking about months any more. His release will be sooner than months," she said.

A spokesman for Mrs. Mandela said she and the senior leader of the banned African National Congress (ANC) had discussed "preliminary arrangements" for his release.

Further on Possible Mandela Release*AB0801150690 Paris AFP in English 1450 GMT
8 Jan 90*

[Text] Paarl, South Africa, Jan 8 (AFP)—A radiant Winnie Mandela, wife of jailed black South African nationalist leader Nelson Mandela, said Monday that her husband would be free in a matter of weeks.

It was the first time Mrs Mandela has appeared optimistic over the prospects for Mr. Mandela's imminent release. She was speaking after visiting him for more than three hours.

"We are not talking about months any more. His release will be sooner than months," she said.

"It is the first time that he has called me to discuss preparations for his release," Mrs Mandela told reporters. But she refused to venture a specific date.

After previous visits with the senior leader of the banned African national congress (ANC), Mrs Mandela had insisted that she did not believe widespread rumors that he would soon be freed.

Mr Mandela, 71, has been in jail since 1962. Monday's announcement, which coincides with the 78th anniversary of the ANC, was the first time he himself has indicated, through his wife, that his release is on the agenda.

"This is the real stuff now," a broadly smiling Mrs Mandela said.

Last year, the government of new South African President Frederik de Klerk freed six top ANC activists after many years in prison, including Mr Mandela's top aide, Walter Sisulu.

Seven ANC veterans are due at the organization's exile headquarters in the Zambian capital, Lusaka, on January 15 in what regional analysts see as a clear sign of a change in Pretoria's attitude.

At a Johannesburg press conference on Friday, South African Foreign Minister Pik Botha hinted at the imminent release of Mr Mandela when he said the government would "deal with" obstacles to negotiations with black leaders "fast and soon".

Mrs Mandela met alone with her husband, who is serving a life sentence on anti-state charges and was transferred to the comfortable warder's house at Victor Verster Prison here in December 1988.

But she was later carrying red roses offered her by Dullah Omar, Cape town regional vice-president of the United Democratic Front (UDF), the main anti-apartheid coalition.

Mr Omar a lawyer, acts as spokesman during the Paarl visits. He Monday told reporters that Mrs Mandela "was called by Mr Mandela to discuss preliminary arrangements about his release".

The ANC, formed on January 8, 1912, was banned in 1960 and had been obliged to fight apartheid rule by South Africa's white minority from its exile headquarters.

It has called for freedom for political prisoners, the lifting of bans on anti-apartheid organizations—including the ANC, the withdrawal of security forces from black township, and an end to South Africa's state of emergency.

A visibly moved Mrs Mandela arrived later at Jan Smuts Airport in Johannesburg.

Asked whether Mr Mandela had shown strong feelings, during their meeting, about his apparently imminent release, she said: "After 27 years in jail, Mandela has no emotion."

But she rushed over to a white child named Margo who happened to be waiting for relatives in the reception area and grabbed a book the young girl was holding.

"Dear Margo, we shall be free," she wrote in the flyleaf. "You are the South Africa of tomorrow. Winnie Mandela."

Says Nelson's Release 'Reality'

MB0801164790 Johannesburg Television Service
in English 1600 GMT 8 Jan 90

[Text] The ANC [African National Congress] leader Nelson Mandela and his wife, Winnie, are reported to have discussed, for the first, preparations for his release.

Mrs Mandela spoke to reporters at Jan Smuts Airport after seeing her husband at the Victor Verster Prison earlier today and gave them the following quote:

I am very hopeful now, she said, this is the real stuff.

[Begin video recording] [Winnie Mandela] I haven't got any specific day for his release, but it was the first time that he has called me to discuss the preliminary preparations for his release.

[Unidentified reporter] Do you feel more optimistic now? How are you feeling about this?

[Winnie Mandela] Well, I think my general attitude has always been known, and this is the first time I have accepted it as a reality, that he is to be released this year. [end recording]

Invites Lawyers to Meeting

AB0901130490 Paris AFP in English 1228 GMT
9 Jan 90

[By Michael Sanders]

[Text] Johannesburg, Jan 9 (AFP)—Jailed African National Congress [ANC] leader Nelson Mandela has invited 12 liberal lawyers to meet him in his prison house in Paarl east of Cape Town this week, a legal spokesman said Tuesday.

Pius Langa, president of National Association of Democratic Lawyers (NADEL), said the 12 would meet him in two groups Wednesday and Thursday to "discuss the role of lawyers in this country."

News of the meetings fuelled speculation about Mr. Mandela's imminent release from a life sentence imposed in June 1964.

The South African press ran front-page pictures Tuesday of his wife Winnie beaming at the end of her visit to Paarl on Monday, called by Mr. Mandela to discuss preliminary arrangements for his release.

She emerged bubbling over with enthusiasm, saying his freedom was "no longer a question of months," a marked contrast to the dampening statements she usually issues after her visits.

THE STAR daily here, under the banner headline "Mandela fever sweeps the world," forecast that his release would come "immediately before" or within weeks of the opening of parliament in Cape Town on February 2.

In an editorial it said: "The stage is set for President (Frederik) de Klerk to announce concessions that will set negotiations in motion—especially lifting the ban on restricted political groups, abolishing the emergency regulations and releasing political prisoners.

"The public is now ready for such a move and the world expects it."

The pro-government English daily THE CITIZEN forecast: "Soon Nelson Mandela himself will be out of jail, and he is not going to be released into a vacuum, as they say.

"No, he is going to be free to come and go where he likes and say and do what he likes....

"For the name of the game now is negotiation, and getting the ANC to participate in negotiations is a major part of the game.

"Who better to be a facilitator of talks than Mandela, who already talks to cabinet ministers and the state president?"

Mr. Mandela had talks with Mr. de Klerk in December, after meeting the head of state's predecessor, Pieter Botha, in July. He has also received several visits from government ministers in his prison house.

A source at the Foreign Affairs Department Tuesday told AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE that the release of Mr. Mandela and the lifting of the three-year-old state of emergency were incumbent on Mr. de Klerk and his executive powers.

Other changes demanded by the ANC—such as the repeal of the Group Areas Act reserving the best housing for whites—were up to parliament.

The implication was that if Mr. de Klerk wants to keep the initiative he must show the way to parliament by using those executive powers to free Mr. Mandela either before parliament meets or at the start of the sitting, perhaps making the proclamation in his key opening speech on February 2.

2 Killed, 'Many' Injured in Transportation Strike

MB0901082690 Johannesburg SAPA in English
0822 GMT 9 Jan 90

[Text] Johannesburg, Jan 9, SAPA—An unknown number of SATS [South African Transportation Service] workers were killed in strike related violence on Tuesday [9 January] morning at Germiston Station, unionists and witnesses said.

COSATU [Congress of South African Trade Unions] spokesperson, Ariel Mabelane, said he believed 21 people were killed in an incident involving police, workers and members of the public.

He said police were loading bodies onto a van and taking them to a morgue.

SATS spokesman Leon Els confirmed people had been killed in an incident, but he was not sure how many.

Police had no immediate comment.

Legal sources later put the death toll at two—but said "many, many" people had been injured.

A strike by SATS workers, now in its tenth week, over wages and recognition of the SA Railways and Harbours Workers Union, has resulted in millions of rands damage to SATS stock, thousands of sacking of striking workers, and scores of thousands of lost man hours as well as huge losses in workers' earnings.

'At Least' 6 Killed

MB0901085890 Johannesburg SAPA in English
0851 GMT 9 Jan 90

[Text] Johannesburg, Jan 9, SAPA—At least six workers were killed and many injured in violent clashes between railway strikers and alleged strike breakers at the Germiston station on Tuesday [9 January] morning, according to the Congress of SA [South African] Trade Unionis [COSATU] and police.

A legal source on the spot complained that, despite being urged to disperse the vigilantes, police had allegedly failed to intervene in the conflict.

The source said strikers wearing union T-shirts were being singled out for assault as they alighted from trains at the station.

An East Rand police spokesman said the clash happened about 9am.

Strikers were apparently waiting at the station when non-strikers arrived in a train.

A fight broke out and knives, pangas [machetes] and stones were used in the clash.

Riot police used teargas to disperse the mob.

The secretary of COSATU's Witwatersrand region, Ariel Mabelane, said strikers had been attacked with sharp instruments and knobkerries while on their way to a meeting at the offices of the SA Railway and Harbour Workers Union (SARHWU) in Germiston.

Ambulances were standing by and dozens of injured workers had been ferried to the Natalspruit Hospital and the Willem Cruywagen Hospital in Germiston, he said.

The violence takes place as SATS [South African Transport Service] management is awaiting a response from SARHWU to its latest proposals for ending the 10-week strike.

SARHWU has pledged to contact management once it has secured a mandate from its members, and a negotiating meeting could take place this week.

Angola

Summit of 8 Heads of State Postponed 2d Time

LD0801222190 Lisbon Domestic Service
in Portuguese 2200 GMT 8 Jan 90

[Excerpt] The summit of the eight African heads of state in Luanda on the Angolan peace process has been postponed for the second time due to the Zairean president being unavailable, according to a message from Mobutu Sese Seko to Jose Eduardo dos Santos.

There is no official explanation for the postponement of the summit of the eight. [passage omitted] [passage indistinct]

Soviet Envoy Denies Involvement in Fighting

AB0901123390 Paris AFP in French 1153 GMT
9 Jan 90

[Text] Lisbon, 9 Jan (AFP)—No Soviet soldiers are currently involved in the fighting in Angola. This was stated today by the Soviet envoy to Luanda, Vladimir Kazimirov, quoted by the ANGOLAN PRESS AGENCY, ANGOP.

According to ANGOP monitored in Lisbon, the Soviet diplomat thereby wanted to deny the allegations made by the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA, which enjoys Washington's support) which claimed that Soviet troops and Portuguese mercenaries were fighting on the side of the Luanda troops in the south of Angola. "A group of army experts have effectively been working in Angola, but this is not a secret," Mr Kazimirov stated.

Last week, the UNITA announced that four Soviets had been wounded during the fighting which flared up in the last days of December and which are still going on, especially in the southeast of the country.

UNITA Rejects MPLA's Peace Proposals

MB0801122090 (Clandestine) KUP in English
to Southern and Central Africa 1206 GMT 8 Jan 90

[Text] [No dateline as received] UNITA [National Union for the Total Independence of Angola] has rejected recent proposals announced by the MPLA [Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola] president, Jose Eduardo dos Santos, in his New Year message, saying that these proposals represent a setback in the search for peace in Angola.

A communique released in Jamba following a one-day meeting of UNITA's Political Bureau last Saturday [6 January] and signed by the movement's president, Dr Jonas Savimbi, says that the urgent question is the signing of the cease-fire proposal presented by the mediator, Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko, to UNITA

and the MPLA and direct negotiations between the two sides, since both have expressed their confidence in the mediator.

The communique adds that the current large-scale MPLA military offensive against UNITA in Southeast Angola is a clear indication that the MPLA leaders are bent on a military option and contradicts the language of peace.

According to the communique, MPLA President Jose Eduardo dos Santos, the chief of staff of the MPLA army, FAPLA [People's Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola], Franca Ndalu and other MPLA leaders, are taking an active part in the current military offensive against UNITA and recently visited the operational area at Cuito Cuanavale and Menongue.

The communique notes that the only way out for peace in Angola is the cease-fire, direct negotiations between UNITA and the MPLA, multi-party democracy and national reconciliation in the country.

Political Bureau Calls for Peace

MB0901055090 (Clandestine) Voice of Resistance
of the Black Cockerel in English to Southern
and Central Africa 0514 GMT 9 Jan 90

[Communique issued by the UNITA Central Committee Political Bureau in Jamba on 7 January—read by announcer]

[Text] The Political Bureau of the Central Committee met in Jamba in an ordinary session on 6 January 1990 under the chairmanship of its president, Dr Jonas Malheiro Savimbi, and examined the political and military situation in the country and took, among other things, the following decisions:

1. UNITA [National Union for the Total Independence of Angola] openly disagrees with the so-called new peace proposals recently announced by the president of the MPLA [Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola], Jose Eduardo dos Santos, in his end-of-year message, which represents a setback in the efforts in search of peace in Angola. The (?pressing) question is the signing of the cease-fire proposal presented by the mediator, President Mobutu Sese Seko, to the two parties, and [words indistinct] negotiations between UNITA and the MPLA. UNITA and the MPLA having reaffirmed their confidence in the mediator, it is logical to follow and support his diligence.

2. The large-scale offensive which the MPLA has been carrying out since 21 December 1989 against UNITA in the Cuito Cuanavale area is a clear military option of the MPLA, and it represents the most flagrant nonsense in any language of peace. This bellicose action is not only confined to the so-called hardliners within the MPLA leadership. In effect, Jose Eduardo dos Santos, Franca Ndalu, and others are directly participating in directing the current offensive [word indistinct] all of them having recently visited the operation area in Menongue and Cuito. UNITA vigorously repudiates this bellicose

action of the MPLA at the moment when the Angolan people and the international community as a whole call for peace in Angola.

3. In the light of this bellicose action of the Luanda regime, UNITA has no other alternative but to resist. But to resist in order to negotiate, for there is no other way out for Angola other than cease-fire, direct UNITA-MPLA negotiations, free elections, multiparty democracy, and gaining national reconciliation in the country.

Our country free or death!

United we shall win!

[Issued] Jamba, bastion of the Angolan resistance, 7 January 1990

[Signed] President Dr Jonas Malheiro Savimbi

KUP: Leaders Avoid Luanda Summit

MB0901124590 (Clandestine) KUP in English
to Southern and Central Africa 1210 GMT 9 Jan 90

[Text] [No dateline as received]—Seven African heads of state scheduled to attend a summit meeting on Angola in the Angolan capital, Luanda, today, have refused to do so because of their opposition to the Luanda regime's current large-scale military offensive against UNITA [National Union for the Total Independence of Angola] in the southeastern part of the country.

According to reliable diplomatic sources, most of the seven African heads of state invited to attend the Luanda meeting are ready to approve the MPLA's [Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola] military offensive aimed at capturing the strategic UNITA stronghold of Mavinga. [sentence as received] They are instead insisting on the immediate signing of the cease-fire, under the auspices of the mediator, Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko.

The sources believe that the move represents an important shift by African countries with regard to the Angolan problem.

The proposed summit meeting has been postponed several times over the past two months.

Comoros

700 Protest Election Postponement 8 Jan

* 10801193690 Mayotte Radio France Overseas
in French 1600 GMT 8 Jan 90

[Text] Demonstrations took place this morning in Moroni, Comoros. About 700 people protested against the postponement of the presidential elections to 18 February.

The demonstrators [words indistinct] by President Said Mohamed Djohar to adjourn the presidential elections due on Sunday, 14 January. The Gendarmerie fired tear gas at the demonstrators who, while scattering, threw stones at government buildings, burned a government vehicle and damaged other government vehicles. Seven vehicles are reported damaged. Several casualties are reported on the side of the demonstrators.

Thirteen opposition parties were to hold a meeting this morning to explain their disagreement with President Djohar regarding the holding of the elections, which was, according to the opposition, decided without consultations.

The acting president had forbidden any meeting before the beginning of the election campaign on 27 January. He justified this postponement by citing the need to respect the legal time limits provided by the Constitution.

Good news, however, for civil servants: The Comoran finance minister announced that they would receive their salaries for 3 months—October, November, and December—which they had not received. The October and November salaries will be paid from tomorrow, and the December salaries before the elections. That is a gesture which should encourage teachers to resume classes. Classes were scheduled to resume today, but the teachers went on strike.

The total salary amount is equivalent to 20 million French francs. France has provided 10 million francs of emergency budgetary assistance. The Comoran finance minister also said that his country's debt to the World Bank had been repaid, as well as scholarships to Comoran students abroad.

Benin

Trade Union Leader Zakari Released 8 Jan

AB0801191790 Paris AFP in English 1854 GMT
8 Jan 90

[Text] Cotonou, Jan 8 (AFP)—Benin trade union leader Ibrahim Zakari, arrested by police overnight Saturday, was released here Monday, an AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE correspondent reported.

Mr. Zakari, secretary-general of the Benin National Union of Post and Telecommunications Workers, had been charged with inciting employees to strike at the Benin-Niger joint office which manages neighboring Niger's goods rail transport to the coast.

Meanwhile, Postal Union members meeting Monday decided to split from the umbrella Benin National Worker's Revolutionary Party.

Leaflets calling for a general strike were circulating in an otherwise quiet capital on Monday.

The financially-strapped government of President Mathieu Kerekou has been unable to win many civil servants back to work despite help from international creditors with its debts.

Ghana

Daily Denounces U.S. Envoy's Position on Aid

AB0601113090 Accra Domestic Service in English
0700 GMT 6 Jan 90

[From the press review]

[Text] The GHANAIAN TIMES quotes the U.S. ambassador to Kenya, Mr Smith Hempstone, as saying that the United States will soon cut economic aid to African countries due to his government's decision to expand aid to certain East European countries currently undergoing reforms. The paper says the matter is not one of robbing Peter to pay Paul. It raises a lot of questions regarding the morality of using aid as a political tool.

The TIMES points out that the people of Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany were the same people in their respective countries before the United States decided that it is worthwhile to help them economically. Similarly, the people of Africa are the same people with the same needs and aspirations before America decided that they should now get less help.

In the opinion of the paper, what emerges is a picture of cynical politicians who dish out a very small proportion of the wealth of the world's most affluent country, not on an objective assessment of real needs, but according to where it will score the biggest political gains. While making it clear that it is not against U.S. aid to socialist Europe, the TIMES says what it does not like even more is the implication in the U.S. ambassador's statement that America is so poor that in order to provide aid to

Eastern Europe, she will have to take it away from Africa and other developing nations.

Liberia

Further Reportage on Situation in Nimba County

Humanitarian Aid Arriving

AB0801161090 Paris AFP in French 1341 GMT
8 Jan 90

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] International aid organizations are preparing to help the countries that are giving shelter to the Liberian refugees. The French humanitarian organization Medecins Sans Frontieres, has already sent two medical teams and emergency equipment to the Danane region (western Ivory Coast), where thousands of Liberians were given shelter. The Ivorian authorities did not mention the aid sent by the French organization. The authorities and Ivorian media continue to observe total silence on the situation along the border with Liberia and on the events in that country. [passage omitted]

Nimba Cut Off From Rest of Country

AB0801152490 Paris AFP in English 1508 GMT
8 Jan 90

[Text] Abidjan, Jan 8 (AFP)—Liberian soldiers kept northeastern Nimba County cut off from the rest of the country Tuesday [as received] as refugees from fighting fled instead to neighboring Ivory Coast and Guinea, informed sources here said.

Government troops have been fighting rebel insurgents in the region since December 24, and both the Liberian authorities and refugees to Ivory Coast report that hundreds of civilians have been killed.

Reports Tuesday [as received] were the first time sources here in Ivory Coast mentioned Guinea as a possible haven for refugees fleeing their homeland. They said there were large numbers of refugees but could not give precise figures.

The sources said no passenger vehicles were moving between Nimba County and the Liberian capital, Monrovia. Police have set up roadblocks in most areas late at night, they added.

Authorities in Monrovia claim that the military has regained control in Nimba County, adding that journalists may travel to the region but "at their own risk."

The capital was calm Monday and people were moving about freely, informed sources said.

Meanwhile, Radio ELWA, a religious radio station operating out of Monrovia, broadcast late Sunday that President Samuel Doe "expressed serious concern over the safety and welfare of patriotic Liberians who fled to the Ivory Coast to escape the actions of dissident forces in Nimba."

It added that Mr Doe was to request "the cooperation of Ivorian authorities in ensuring the safety of the Liberians presently stationed on their soil."

The Monrovia Government had earlier accused Ivory Coast of turning a blind eye to dissident activities and said it had proof that a destabilization bid was launched from Ivorian soil.

Monrovia has blamed rebels for killing some 200 civilians in Nimba, while eyewitnesses interviewed by AFP at the weekend said soldiers had also killed residents and burned villages in "mopping-up operations."

Witness Soldiers Killed Civilians

*AB0801210290 London BBC World Service in English
1615 GMT 8 Jan 90*

[From the "Focus on Africa" program]

[Text] Sixteen days after the abortive invasion of Liberia's southern Nimba County, initial reports about a massacre by National Patriotic Front rebels are being contradicted by stories of government reprisals in the area. On Friday, a senior Liberian Army officer said the rebels had killed over 200 unarmed Nimba citizens, and thousands of people fled across the border into Ivory Coast. But now, stories are circulating about army reprisals in the wake of the operation against the dissidents. Elizabeth Blunt is in Monrovia. [Reporter's name indistinct] asked her what people have been saying.

[Begin recording] [Blunt] The people we quoted on Friday [5 January] had come from a village just by the border which the rebels had attacked on Thursday [4 January]. In fact, they hadn't attacked the villagers themselves. They attacked the immigration post nearby, and killed the immigration officer. And they had come to the village, but they did apparently no harm, so the villagers were not terribly worried, and they just stayed around. And that was on Thursday, and then on Friday the Army arrived. The rebels disappeared, melted away. And the Army arrived with jeeps with machine guns mounted on them, and started firing, as they said, absolutely indiscriminately in the village, and they say people being killed, and they ran to the border which is a river there, and scrambled across as fast they could. And then, they said that they could that the soldiers were burning their village behind them. And they said they did not know how many people were killed, but about 150 people—out of a village of 200 to 250—arrived on the other side. The others, they do not know what happened to them.

[Reporter] Did you have any idea how widespread the Army reprisals might have been in Nimba county?

[Blunt] They seem to be pushing northward because they got to [place names indistinct] We haven't really any news of whether they [words indistinct]. What seems to have happened is that the rebels are now splitting up and melting into the forest in small groups, and they are surely going to be extremely difficult to dislodge. All the

Army can do is go to places where they know they are staying, and it sounds as if they are conducting a sort of spot-check policy. Anyone they suspect of harboring rebels, any village they suspect of being sympathetic is being burnt to ruins, to the ground.

[Reporter] What is your information as to what happened in Nimba County as of now?

[Blunt] As of now, it seems difficult. People who came down [words indistinct] the main road was open. In fact, somebody came down on Saturday evening from the mines where [words indistinct] So it is possible, the way there are lots and lots of security checks. There is a new county superintendent being sworn-in in Nimba County. The original one was sacked because he did not take reports of rebel activity seriously. And quite interestingly, the new superintendent in his inaugural speech, he called on the dissidents to surrender, and he suggested that they might like to surrender to religious leaders, rather than the Army, which might perhaps, [words indistinct] them because, obviously, they would feel that if they surrendered to the Army, they might not be safe—but they might surrender to religious leaders, and that might persuade them to give up and come in.

[Reporter] But what is the atmosphere like in Monrovia at the moment?

[Blunt] Well, you realize quite how far away [word indistinct] is from Monrovia. It is such a long way that it does not affect people down there at all. Like you said, as usual, there is a big funeral going on today. A well-known man who was murdered in very unpleasant circumstances last week, Robert Philips. That is very mysterious, and his funeral has attracted a huge crowd that really dominated the center of town today. But also, [words indistinct] that they do not seem to be doing anything very serious. They are going to market, and [word indistinct] and behaving in a [words indistinct] people are not going to Nimba unless they have to. People who do not have business, urgent business in Nimba are coming down. People who live in the area [words indistinct]. [end recording]

Life 'Returning to Normal' in Nimba

*AB0901105390 Dakar PANA in English 1010 GMT
9 Jan 90*

[Text] Monrovia, 9 Jan (LINA/PANA)—Life in Nimba County, about 310 kilometres north of Monrovia was Monday reported to be returning to normal, nearly two weeks after government troops crushed attempts by dissidents to enter and destabilize Liberia.

A LIBERIA NEWS AGENCY correspondent who had been covering the situation since 24 December, reported that citizens and residents who had "panicked and fled" Liberia for towns and villages in neighbouring Cote d'Ivoire [Ivory Coast], have begun returning home. An estimated 10,000 Liberians had reportedly crossed into [Cote] d'Ivoire.

The correspondent said the market in the county's capital, Sanniquellie, deserted for about a week, was again the scene of "busy business activities," as consumers moved about to purchase essential items.

The streets of Sanniquellie have also taken on scenes of citizens and residents gathering in what had appeared to be a ghost town in recent days.

Passengers stranded for days in Nimba County "had begun flocking to car parks in search of vehicles to talk to them about their business."

The correspondent said the county's new superintendent, Col. Jackson Payne, appointed a few days following the disturbances last week toured various parts of Sanniquellie to appeal to citizens and residents to return to their respective towns and villages throughout Nimba County.

Col. Jackson, former deputy defence minister for operations, assured the citizens that the Liberian Government was capable of providing protection for them and their properties.

Meanwhile, 200 "innocent" people were reported killed when dissidents entered Liberia through Butuo, a border town with Cote d'Ivoire on 24 December. General Edward Smith who commanded government troops to quell disturbances in the county last week has said.

Gen. Smith said only one government soldier was killed in an attack launched on their border post near Cote d'Ivoire while a second was wounded and is presently receiving treatment at a hospital in Monrovia.

Nigeria

General Bali's Resignation Called 'Minor Coup'

AB0801170190 Paris AFP in French 1517 GMT
8 Jan 90

[By Gerard Vandenberghe]

[Text] Lagos, 8 Jan (AFP)—The announcement that General Domkat Bali was leaving the government and the Army marks a consolidation of powers by President Ibrahim Babangida. It has already been called "a minor coup," according to observers in Lagos. Gen Domkat Bali, Nigeria's highest ranking military officer and the number three man of the regime, today submitted his resignation from the Army and refused the portfolio of interior minister, which had been offered to him. Gen Domkat Bali's resignation is regarded as a fall into disfavor, although it took place in a dignified manner. Even commentators agree that President Babangida has high "regard" for the country's highest ranking military officer. On 29 December, President Babangida announced a major Cabinet reshuffle and changes in the Army high Command. Gen Domkat Bali was then given the Portfolio of the Interior, but lost that of Defense, which the head of state took over. By doing so, General Babangida officially gave himself more power than he has ever had since becoming president, observers say.

The magnitude of these changes and their unexpected nature—most of the affected officers had not been informed until a few days earlier—could make people think that Gen Babangida took these decisions to guard against an "emergency" involving internal disputes, observers stressed.

For example, Gen Babangida has practically excluded from power an important military pressure group known here as the "Langtang Mafia" (from the name of one of the main towns of Plateau State, Central Nigeria, the "Middle Belt" Region, from where most of the excluded soldiers hail). He thus withdrew the post of Interior Minister from Colonel John Shagaya; commander of the 2d Mechanized Infantry Division of Ibadan from General Joshua Dogonyaro; and permanent representative to the United Nations from General Joe Garba. All these men have been replaced by qualified officers described as the "faithful among the faithful."

This is what happened to Generals Aliyu Mohamed, former head of the powerful Security Services and Ike Nwachukwu, former foreign affairs minister, both of whom will henceforth command the 1st and 2d Mechanized Infantry Divisions of Ibadan and Kaduna, considered the country's most strategic units in case of external or internal conflict, observers pointed out. Similarly, Squadron Admiral Murtala Nyako and General Nuraini Yusuff, new chiefs of staff of the Marine and the Air Force, have been promoted to other top-level posts. People are also wondering about the meaning of other changes like that of Olu Falae, former secretary of the Federal Government, and now minister of finance. "As secretary of the Federal Government, Olu Falae had control over all documents, and all the ministers were accountable to him. Now, he has been brought down to their level," a senior diplomat in post in Lagos said. According to other people, Olu Falae's new position will openly show him as a "boss." The same people see Mr Rilwanu Lukman's appointment at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a way for President Babangida to give more prestige and influence to Nigeria on the international level. According to this diplomat and other observers, President Babangida has taken risks in reshuffling his cabinet just after giving a new orientation to political life in the country: "A soldier should know that it is dangerous to open several fronts at the same time," he added. "Why would a president who has already programed his departure need to strengthen his power?" the diplomat concluded and recalled that President Babangida has just reaffirmed his decision to hand over power to the civilian head of state who will be elected on 1 October 1992.

Internal Affairs Minister Appointed

AB0801181190 Kaduna Domestic Service in English
1700 GMT 8 Jan 90

[Text] A new minister of internal affairs was today sworn in by President Ibrahim Babangida. He is Commodore Lanmba Dung Gwom of the Nigerian Navy. Commodore Lanmba Dung Gwom replaced Lieutenant General Domkat Bali, who had earlier been named for the post. At the swearing in ceremony, the president said Lt Gen

Bali had earlier accepted the appointment as internal affairs minister while on leave. He said that returning from leave, the general then changed his mind. The president pointed out that there was no problem between him and Lt Gen Bali. He also seized the occasion to explain that the appointment at various levels of Government was not based on religious or geographical considerations.

Appointment System Defended

*AB0901090890 Lagos Domestic Service in English
1800 GMT 8 Jan 90*

[Text] President Ibrahim Babangida has strongly defended the system being adopted by his administration in appointment to public offices. The president was speaking at Dodan Barracks when he swore in a new minister of internal affairs. He is Commodore Lamba Dung Gwom. State House correspondent, Laide Shimorin, says Commodore Dung Gwom replaces Lieutenant General Domkat Bali, who had earlier been named for the post.

[Begin Shimorin recording] At the swearing-in ceremony, President Babangida explained that Lt Gen Bali had earlier accepted the offer to be internal affairs minister while he was on leave. He said that when he returned from leave, he changed his mind and formally wrote to disengage from the Nigerian Army from April. President Babangida explained that he had discussions with Gen Bali and agreed with his reasons for retirement. He said that there were no cracks in the walls as were being speculated by those whom he called Dodan Barracks watchers. He said the walls were as strong as they were and there was no problem between him and Lt Gen Domkat Bali.

The president also used the occasion to state that appointments in the various levels of government were not based on religious or geographical considerations. He condemned (?cronies) who commented that appointments were given to northerners, Christians, or Muslims. President Babangida reiterated that it had been stated in the Constitution that a state was a unit of representation in this country. To this end, he said the national character would always be reflected in appointments and all those appointed were chosen on merit.

On the appointments in the Armed Forces, the president said that those who got the appointments were the next senior officers who merited the appointments. He requested Nigerians who were interested to take a look back to 15 years ago and see how developments in the Armed Forces had been. He said that there had been a time when all top brass of the Armed Forces were all Muslims or all Christians and even some without any

religion. President Babangida said the present administration would always see Nigeria as one, no south, no north, no Christians, and no Muslims. He said it would also ensure that those who got a higher position must be people who were competent and capable of doing the job and whose interest was Nigeria.

Four directors general were also sworn in at the ceremony. The directors general are Mr Chukwuemeka Oranika, for the Federal Capital Territory; Alhaji Ahmed Abubakar, for the Ministry of Finance; Alhaji Abubakar Abdulkebir, for the Ministry of Trade; and Dr Alex Usman Kadjuri, for the newly created Ministry of Water Resources. [end recording]

Christians Protest Against 'Islamic Stranglehold'

*AB0901112590 Paris AFP in French 2205 GMT
8 Jan 90*

[Excerpt] Lagos, 8 Jan (AFP)—General Ibrahim Babangida today declared that there were "no cracks in the walls" in Nigeria, in response to comments made following the important changes made in the government and the military high command on 29 December.

However, also today, demonstrations were organized by Christians in Ondo State (southern Nigeria, close to Lagos) against the "Islamic stranglehold" which, according to them, characterizes the new appointments, well-informed sources stated in the capital. The demonstrations were "brought under control" and there were no victims, according to the sources.

On 29 December, President Babangida carried out a cabinet reshuffle and redeployment in the military high command, which were marked notably by the removal of the chief of general staff, General Domkat Bali, a Christian from Plateau State (central Nigeria), from whom General Babangida took over the post of defense minister. Gen Bali today refused the post of interior minister which he was offered, and announced his resignation soon from the Armed Forces.

Several Nigerians, particularly from the military, now question what they consider an affront by Gen Babangida against the "highest-ranking soldier" in the country. Gen Bali is in fact, the longest serving and highest ranking of the Nigerian generals, and enjoys wide popularity and respect within the Army.

Numerous commentaries have equally been carried by the press on the influx of northern Muslims to positions of command at the ministries and within the military high command with the recent appointments. And Gen Bali, who figures at the top of the victims of the reshuffle, is a Christian, observers point out. [passage omitted]

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